Robert L. Kaufman
34 Jade Lane
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002-1612

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Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
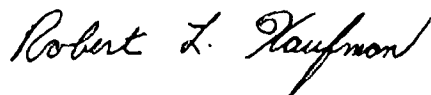Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

Your strong leadership in working to settle the Microsoft antitrust case is certainly in the best interests of America. Federal Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson showed his disdain for judicial ethics by revealing his biased prejudgment to a member of the press in his own judicial chambers long before he issued his opinion in the case. Whatever happened to judges hearing all the evidence and arguments before deciding the case? Whatever happened to judges who aren't ego-induced publicity hounds? Judge Jackson did damage well beyond the judicial and legal community though. His decision to break up Microsoft into pieces, as though he saw himself as Julius Caesar dividing Gaul, pulled down the whole stock market, in my opinion. Technology stocks were badly hurt.

Fortunately, the Court of Appeals later overturned Judge Jackson, and Microsoft and your department have reached a settlement that will be good for American business and the American public.

Microsoft will have to show its cards, its hidden poker hand. It will show the industry its internal interface code and server protocol code, and license its other codes to companies on a non-discriminatory basis. It will allow computer makers to sell non-Microsoft operating systems at the same time they sell Windows, and set uniform prices and terms instead of negotiating. This will allow the industry greater flexibility. I don't know how good this will be for Microsoft, although Microsoft has agreed to it to settle the case and move on. However, it will be very good for the tech industry.

Thank you again for your support of the settlement. Let's hope the new federal judge on the case approves it. I just had to add my voice during the public comment period. This settlement is important for America.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Kaufman